

Q#255

Doc. No. 10,101

Page 1

Excerpt. from Interrogation of MUTO, Akira, dated
16 April 1946, pages 1, 2, 3 and 4.

Questions by Mr. Hyder:

Q. From the time you became Chief of the Military Affairs Bureau in 1939 and up to 1942, the Military Affairs Bureau determined the policies relative to the treatment of prisoners of war?

A. No, the actual prisoners of war camps are built under the direction of my section. The policies pertaining to prisoners of war emanated from the Prisoners of War Information Bureau after it was set up.

Q. In 1942?

A. I am not sure when it was, but I believe it was somewhere around the end of December 1941, or early in 1942.

Q. But up to that time your office had determined the policies governing the treatment of prisoners of war?

A. Yes.

Q. And, of course, you took prisoners from the Chinese Armies?

A. No. The question of whether Chinese captives would be declared prisoners of war or not was quite a problem and it was finally decided in 1938 that because the Chinese conflict was officially known as an "incident" that Chinese captives would not be regarded as prisoner of war. This time, however, if there was to be a declaration of war all captives were to be treated as prisoners of war.

Q. As a matter of fact the China Incident was a war, was it not?

A. Actually yes, but the Japanese Government looked upon it as being an incident.

Q. So that when you became Chief of Military Affairs Bureau in 1939, you carried on a policy of not treating the Chinese captives as prisoners of war?

A. Yes.

Q. What regulations governed the treatment of the Chinese that were not treated as prisoners of war?

A. We had no connection whatsoever with this matter in the Military Affairs section. It was all handled by the Nanking Government under Wang Chin Wei. Before the setting up of the Nanking Government, these matters were handled by the Chinese (puppet) Government that existed in Central China and in North China.

Q. That government, of course, was a puppet government dominated by Japan?

A. You may call it that, but I personally do not believe it to be so.

Q. In 1939, 1940, 1941, the Japanese army was fighting in China, is that correct?

A. Yes.

Q. They took large numbers of prisoners, did they not?

A. Because, as I just told you, these matters were handled by the Chinese Government, we received no reports of how many prisoners were taken and only read in the papers that such and such elements of the Chinese Chungking army had surrendered.

Q. Did your Japanese army turn the captured Chinese over to the Nanking Government after their capture?

A. Yes, and in turn the Nanking Government put these people into their own armies.

Q. Didn't the Japanese army frequently work Chinese prisoners?

A. Whether the Japanese army actually used them or whether they were used by Japanese contractors, I do not know.

Q. You were in China in 1939, were you not?

A. Yes, until October 1939.

Q. Very frequently your army took prisoners, did it not?

A. There were very few prisoners taken at this time. Those that were taken were turned over to the North China Government and used as soldiers.

Q. Whose army utilized these soldiers that had been captured?

A. They were used by this North China Army (Chinese). It was called something or other, but the name I do not recall at this moment.

Q. That is the Chinese Army that collaborated with the Japanese Army?

A. Yes.

* * * * *

Q. What were the orders given by your command with respect to the treatment of the Chinese captured by you in the course of the fighting?

A. Those orders had been in effect for some time and while I was there I have no recollection of any new orders having been put out.

Q. What were those orders that you carried out?

A. It was as I just related to you; that is to say, that they will be turned over to the North China Army.

Q. You mean to say that you didn't have an internment camp of your own?

A. There was no prisoner of war camp. As they were not considered prisoners of war, the distinction becomes somewhat complicated and we felt that once they had laid down their arms and surrendered that they would be treated as ordinary citizens and be turned over to the Chinese.

Q. To what Chinese government were you turning over the prisoners that you captured?

A. The North China Provisional Government.

Q. Whose government was that?

A. O-KUKUBIN. I think the first character is read in Chinese as Wang, but otherwise I do not know.

Q. Is that government under the government of Chiang Kai-shek?

A. No.

Q. It was opposed to Chiang Kai-shek?

A. Yes.

Q. And it was friendly to the Japanese Government?

A. Yes.

Excerpt from Interrogation of MUTO, Akira dated 20 April, 1946, pages 5, 6, 7.

Questions by Mr. Hyder:

Q. General, in November 1937 you joined the Staff of the Central China Army?

A. Yes.

Q. Who was the Commander of that Army?

A. General MATSUI.

Q. Did you join it in the first part of November? Do you recall approximately the date?

A. In the latter part.

Q. Nanking fell in December?

A. Yes.

Q. And you were there from December until when, in Nanking?

A. I returned to Shanghai around December 24th or 25th.

Q. Nanking fell approximately December 13th?

A. Yes, around the 13th or 14th.

Q. And you left about two weeks later?

A. Yes, I was there around ten days.

Q. And what was your position at the time?

A. Adjutant to the Chief of Staff.

Q. General, were you aware of the misbehavior of the Japanese troops at the time of the surrender in Nanking?

A. At that time General MATSUI was suffering from tuberculosis and had been in the rear area. We came to Nanking for the taking over ceremonies. I remained ten days. At that time the town was already cleaned up and it was safe for us to walk about alone. I had not heard of the Japanese soldiers acting up.

Q. Either before or after the time you entered Nanking City proper?

A. I had heard of incidents from my superior TSUKADA, who was Chief of Staff.

Q. What did he tell you?

A. The original order for the taking of Nanking stated that only picked, fine troops were to enter the town. The remainder of the troops were to remain out. However, all of the units entered the town, for which action General MATSUI was reprimanded by the staff. I heard from TSUKADA that there were incidents of stealing, killing, assault and rape. Following that, orders were issued for all units except security troops to leave the town.

Q. General, what was the reason for the order requiring that only picked troops could enter the city? Had there been misbehavior of the troops in other cities?

A. It was felt that if too many troops were allowed in Nanking, there was due to be trouble, inasmuch as the troops had suffered many hardships since Shanghai. The men were under pressure for such a long time that it was felt inadvisable to allow them in town.

Q. MATSUI, of course, knew of those reports?

A. General MATSUI heard of the incidents afterwards and became quite enraged at the conduct.

Q. Did he tell you this?

A. I was there when General MATSUI heard of this and was being reprimanded.

Q. By whom?

A. By the Chief of Staff.

(Interpreter: I made a mistake, MATSUI became mad and bawled out his subordinates.)

Q. Now the report listed a great number of such incidents, did it not?

A. The reports did not show very many incidents. As soon as it was published, orders were issued to the MPs to suppress such activities and arrest any participants.

Q. You issued that order?

A. The order was issued by General MATSUI.

Q. When did he do so?

A. The order was issued as soon as he heard of the incidents. The MPs normally had the duty. However, the order was to more severely enforce the regulations.

Q. Was the order issued just before you left or afterwards?

A. As soon as we arrived in Nanking for the ceremonies, he received the information and the order was immediately issued.

Q. Did the incidents reported take place in November of 1937?

A. No, not in November. They first occurred after entry into Nanking.

Q. That was approximately what date?

A. Nanking was entered around the 12th to the 14th, and I believe that's when these incidents started.

Q. You joined MATSUI's Army as it was attempting to take the city of Nanking.

A. Yes, just before that.

Q. How far out of the city was the Army when you joined it?

A. They were still in the vicinity of Shanghai.

Excerpt from Interrogation of MUTO, Akira dated 22 April, 1946, pages 2, 3.

Q. In this report, did it mention incidents singly or just report that so many soldiers had looted the town and robbed the inhabitants?

A. I remember in a report that it was reported that the Chinese people were looted, burglarized, and others, such as rape, etc?

Q. By the Japanese Army?

A. Yes.

Q. Were the incidents reported up in the thousands, hundreds or what was the number given in this report?

A. Between ten and twenty incidents were reported.

Q. Were any other reports made, General?

A. There were two commanders under General MATSUI, and only the number mentioned previously were reported.

Q. What were the names of the two commanders under MATSUI?

A. Prince ASAKA was the Commander of one army, and Lt.Gen. YANAGAWA was the Commander of the other.

Q. Are those men living today, General?

A. Prince ASAKA is still living, but I believe Lt. Gen. YANAGAWA died. I heard that Lt. Gen. YANAGAWA died when he was in Sumatra.

Q. Does the Prince live in Tokyo?

A. I do not know.

Q. General, as a matter of fact, you knew that there were thousands of these incidents rather than a dozen or so, did you not?

A. I can't imagine that there were so many incidents.

Q. General, you read the newspapers at the time, did you not, that mentioned more than thousands -- that ran the number up into the hundreds of thousands in Nanking?

A. I did not read the papers.

Q. You know, of course, that there was such a thing as "The Rape of Nanking"?

A. When I went to North China, I did hear that such a book was published in America concerning the rape of Nanking, but due to the fact that I could not read English, I was unable to read the book.

Q. Now, General, didn't you know that there thousands of these incidents, such as murder, robbery, pillage, rape, by Japanese soldiers?

A. My answer is still same as my previous answer.

Q. You want to go on the record, General, as being entirely ignorant of thousands of such incidents in the rape of Nanking?

A. I followed General MATSUI during the formal entrance into the City of Nanking, and at that time there were between ten to twenty incidents reported to me. At that time it was reported that there were ten to twenty incidents. Also, the City of Nanking was pretty well cleared away, and ten days later I returned to Shanghai. I cannot ever believe or imagine that there were incidents numbering into thousands.

Q. Then your answer is "yes"?

(The witness answered without the question being translated to him in Japanese.)

A. To your statement about putting it into the record, I give the same statement that I could not imagine that it could have run into thousands.

Q. General, your position at that time was Adjutant to the Chief of Staff?

A. Yes.

Q. What were your duties?

A. To assist the Chief of Staff.

* * * * *